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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

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*Gottfried Keller as a Democratic Idealist.* BY EDWARD FRANKLIN HAUCH. (Columbia University Germanic Studies.) New York, 1916. Columbia University Press.

Mr. Hauch offers in the first chapter, covering some thirty pages, a brief survey of the life of Keller in its relations to some phases of political and international history, with scattered quotations from Keller's journalistic writings, private correspondence, fragments of diaries, autobiographic sketches, and from his stories and verses (the latter well translated). The next chapter is devoted to a discussion of the development of literary form "From Roman Fiction to Realism" and of Keller's "religious ideals." This is followed by a chapter on "Realism; Educational Ideals." The essay closes with a few pages on various matters of literary form on which Keller has expressed opinions. The whole is preceded by a few pages of introduction in which a number of general terms occur, like "romanticist," "propagandist," "realist," "idealist," "pessimism," the specific bearing of which on the subject is obscure by reason of the absence of definition and reference.

Only the first chapter deals directly with the subject of the investigation. Mr. Hauch indeed endeavors to attach the remaining parts to the subject by the unsubstantiated identification of "Realism" with "Democracy." This general identification is hardly defensible. Realism as a literary form has in the history of literature not shown any particular affinity for democracy, as can be gathered from the realism of the very undemocratic *Der Stechlin* or *Das edle Blut*, on the one hand; and, on the other, from the romanticism of *Die Räuber*. As for realism as a measure of the content of experience, of the values of things, interesting relations between it and certain democratic tendencies might be pointed out; but this aspect of realism does not appear in the discussion.

The dissertation shows care and information regarding details, but it lacks unity of intention and organization, and, therefore, the chief quality required of a dissertation but so rarely found in the Humanities: definitiveness. Definitiveness is the result of a proper focus and substantial completeness within that focus. A subject of this kind could, in the reviewer's opinion, be treated successfully in one of two ways: One might proceed biographically, giving a comprehensive narrative of the development of one's author and introducing each one of the latter's important expressions bearing on democracy in its proper place as a phase in the growth of a personality; or he might give a systematic, classified summary of the substance of one's

author's views on public life, arranging the material under each head chronologically, and introducing the whole by a brief historical and biographical sketch and a general characterization.

In either case there would be a clear focus in which the reader would at once be able to judge the proper place and significance of each detail. The author of the present study, by offering too many different things under changing focuses, has failed to give one complete thing. His work would have gained in force and unity if he had limited himself to the subject of his first chapter, and systematically, either by the historical or the classificatory method throughout, exhausted the material on hand, too much of which he merely refers without extracting its substance.

The subject suggests an interesting question which requires thorough investigation. What is "democracy" in the German literature of the nineteenth century. Mr. Hauch takes it for granted, as do all the writers with whom the reviewer is familiar, that democracy means popular sovereignty. It is very questionable whether this assumption will hold without far-reaching qualifications for the generation of Freytag in the pre-revolutionary period, to which Keller intellectually, though not politically, largely belongs. The democracy of that generation was the political ideal of the intellectuals; it was an intellectual aristocracy rather than a political democracy. It was an ideal of the rule of the most talented. This ideal explains the comparative ease with which the vast majority of the revolutionists became reconciled to the re-establishment of the old order, reformed through a real merit system. This ideal dominates Freytag's first play: "The Scholar" in which the intellectual aristocrat is to proceed thus: "Confine yourself to the scope of your fellow, then enlarge *his* wants, *his* powers. Ennoble *his* workshop for *him*, consecrate his field for *him*, . . . thus the people will gradually and spontaneously (!) ripen toward manhood." This is not democracy, but an intellectualist paternalism.

Keller's well-known saying, which dates from 1848: "From now on each counts for what he really is worth, and *talent alone* will receive recognition," can only be interpreted as an utterance of a German intellectual of the forties. It is not primarily an expression of a political theory of popular sovereignty which contained many elements of the English political individualism and manifested itself on the Continent in the egalitarianism of the different French revolutions. It is rather to be traced to Herder's and Savigny's historical nationalism and to Humboldt's opposition to the *Polizeistaat*; and to the historic cult of geniuses, the most talented individuals, as the most potent and the truest representatives of their people.

The book of Emil Ermatinger, *Gottfried Keller's Leben, Briefe und Tagebücher, Auf Grund der Biographie Jakob Baechtolds dargestellt* (3 Bde., Stuttgart u. Berlin, Cotta, 1916), of which two volumes have been issued, probably appeared too late to be included in the bibliography.

MARTIN SCHÜTZE